

*The Duty of GOD's People when engaged
in War.*

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the NORTH-CHURCH of CHRIST
in Boston, Sept. 21.

To Captain THOMAS STODDARD, and his
Company ;

On Occasion of their going against the Enemy.

By *Samuel Checkley*, A.M.

Pastor of said Church.

2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8. *Be Strong and Courageous,
be not afraid, nor dismayed for the King of
Assyria, nor for all the Multitude that is with
him ; for there be more with us, than with him.
With him is an Arm of Flesh, but with us is the
LORD our GOD ; to help us and to fight our
Battles.*

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The Duty of GOD's People when they
are in War.

S E R M O N

Preached at the City Church of St. Andrew
on the 24th of Nov. 1741.
By Captain Thomas Stoddard, and his
Congregation.

The Collection of the Money for the



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T H E

Duty of God's People when engaged in War.



I. SAMUEL XIV. 6.

And Jonathan said unto the young Man, that bare his Armour, come and let us go over to the Garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be, that the LORD will work for us, for there is no Restraint to the LORD, to save by many, or by few.

AS it was with the People of GOD under the Old-Testament Dispensation, so it is with his People now; they are surrounded by Enemies, who are continually plotting against them, and watch every Opportunity to lay them waste,-- they try every Method, and sometimes for holy and wise Reasons, they are permitted in some Measure to prevail.

When this is the Case, it becomes the People of GOD, to stir themselves, and use their utmost Endeavours, lest *Zion*, which is spoken against by many, should fall a Prey into their Hands. They may lawfully engage in War; though the Use of Arms

Arms is not necessary, in order to propagate the Gospel of CHRIST, yet, considering the present State of Things, they are necessary, in order to bring down the proud, encroaching Enemies of his People, and they have no Warrant from the Word of GOD, to expect that he will appear for them in any other Way. They are to look for his Blessing in the Use of Means, and if they are animated to this, not only from a Regard to their own Safety, but from a serious Concern for the Glory of GOD, and the Kingdom and Interest of his dear Son, it is a Token for Good.---Happy the People who are thus disposed and influenced ; they have a rational Prospect that the LORD will be their GOD ; that no Designs *formed against them shall prosper*, but that, wherein their Enemies *deal proudly*, he will make it appear, that *he is above them*.----This was the noble Zeal, that fired the Breast of *Jonathan*, and this was the Effect of his Enterprize against the *Philistines*. He was solicitous for the Honour of the GOD of *Israel*, and that GOD, for whose Glory, he was concerned, improved him as an Instrument, to defeat the Enemies of his People, and make his Name honourable.

Here it is necessary to look into the Context. The *Israelites*, were thrown into great Fear, by the vast Army, which the *Philistines* had raised, and encamped against them. A little before, *Jonathan* had made a Conquest of one of their strong Garrisons, * which so enraged the *Philistines*, that they at once declared War, and *gathered themselves together*

* 1 Sam. xiii. 3.

gether to fight with Israel, thirty thousand Chariots, and six thousand Horse-men, and People, as the Sand which is on the Sea Shore in Multitude.---Such was the Effect, this had upon the Israelites, that they hid themselves in Caves, and in Thickets, and in Rocks, and in high Places, and in Pits; and some of the Hebrews went over Jordan, to the Land of Gad and Gilead; some endeavoured to secure themselves, where they thought it would be most unlikely for the Enemy to find them, and others fled as far as they could from present Danger; and those who remained with Saul in Gilgal, were in great Astonishment, when they saw so many betaking themselves to Flight:---Now Jonathan was meditating, what could be done for the Relief of Israel, and also to bring down the Spirits of the Enemy, which no doubt, were greatly raised, when they saw the Israelites running from them.----

It is not unlikely, that he poured out his Soul before GOD upon this Emergency, and entreated him, to appear in this Mount of Difficulty.---And behold, that GOD who had just before said, he would not forsake his People, for his great Name's sake, because it had pleased him, to make them his People, † now interests himself in their Case, and works out a glorious Deliverance. He who hath immediate Access to the Spirits of all Men, was pleased in a wonderful Manner, to influence the Mind of Jonathan.---Under a noble, divine Impulse, with a strong Faith and Confidence in the GOD of Israel, he, with only a young Man, that carried

carried about his Armour, attempts the Deliverance of his People. Though the Garrison, in which the *Philistines* were, stood upon an Eminence, and they might think themselves out of Danger, tho' they mocked *Jonathan* and his *Companion* when they made their Appearance, yet it did not in the least discourage them, but enkindled a greater Ardor.

Jonathan, full of Zeal, Courage and Faith, said to his *Armour Bearer*, come up after me, for the Lord hath delivered them into the Hands of Israel; and *Jonathan* climbed up upon his Hands and Feet, and his *Armour Bearer* after him; and they fell before *Jonathan*, and his *Armour Bearer* slew after him. They soon destroyed about twenty Men, upon which there was a Trembling in the Host, in the Field and among the People; the Garrison and the Spoilers, they also trembled, and they went on beating down one another. † As Mr. Henry observes, “ there was
 “ no visible Cause for Fear. The *Philistines* were
 “ numerous, bold, and advantageously posted; the
 “ *Israelites* had fled before them, not an Enemy
 “ made head against them, but *Jonathan*, and his
 “ Man, and yet they shook like a Leaf. The
 “ Consternation was general, they all trembled,
 “ those, that had been most bold and forward,
 “ shared in the common Fright.---To compleat
 the Confusion, “ even the Earth quaked, and made
 “ them ready to fear, that it would sink under
 “ them.---

Thus GOD's right Hand, and his holy Arm gave *Jonathan* and his *Attendant* the Victory.

† 1 Sam. xiv. 12, to 16th.

This was the Lord's Doing, and it was *marvellous in their Eyes* ; and no doubt, they made a religious Improvement of it.---This Attempt had been very rash and criminal, had not *Jonathan* had a Call from Heaven to engage in it. GOD assured him he should be Victorious ; accordingly he ventured not in his own Strength, but in the Strength of the LORD : He knew that there was *no Restraint to him to save by many or by few*, that he could enable *one to chase a Thousand, and two to put ten Thousand to Flight*, and therefore he would not distrust the Power of GOD, how formidable soever, the Enemy might appear.

What further served to animate him in this Affair, was, that the *Philistines* were not a People in Covenant with GOD ; they were *uncircumcised* : Whereas the *Israelites* had the Token of GOD's Covenant in their Flesh ; he had made Choice of them, for *his People*, and had said, *he would not forsake them, for his great Name's sake* ; therefore *Jonathan* put on Courage, and play'd the Man, firmly persuaded, that GOD would be true to his Promise, and not suffer their Enemies to overthrow them.

And now, it may be, some will say, What is to be inferred from this Part of *Jonathan's* Conduct ? Is he herein to be considered as an Example for us to follow, at the present Day ? To which I answer, No, by no means. He acted under the immediate Direction of Heaven ; he had a particular special Call to go upon this Enterprize, but for which he could not have been justified---However, though *Jonathan* in this Matter is not a Precedent for us to

imitate, yet there is much Instruction to be gathered from this Story ; there are many Lessons to be learnt, peculiarly seasonable, under our present Circumstances.

I purpose, by divine Help, to consider the following Things.

The People of GOD are sometimes called to engage in War.

When this is the Call of Providence, they should go forth in the Fear of GOD, with an humble Sense of their Dependance upon him.

If they make this their Care, they may encourage themselves, that *the Lord will work for them*, that *he*, with whom it is infinitely easy to *save by many or by few*, will prosper them in their Enterprizes.

First. The People of GOD are sometimes called to engage in War. They, as well as the rest of Mankind, are exposed to the Insults and Depredations of Enemies. Their Relation to GOD, as his People, does not secure them. It was no Security to the *Israelites*, as we find in Fact, nor is it any Security to his People in these Days. So far indeed they may take Comfort in this Relation, that while they walk worthy of it, GOD will be on their *Side*; but it doth not free them from the ill Will and Assaults of Enemies. Yea, they are often singled out, as the Objects of their Hatred and Scorn, and many Attempts are made for their Subversion.---What is the
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the Duty of GOD's People at such a Time? Are they to give up all, without making any Defence? or, may they expect, that GOD will appear for them, when they are not in the Use of Means for their own Safety? The former is not required of them; the latter would be wicked and presumptuous. They are to be justified in *setting up their Banners*, and enlisting *Soldiers*; and *they* are to be commended, whether *Officers, or Soldiers*, who, when occasion calls, offer themselves in the public Service.

It is not sufficient that the People of God, *pray for the Peace of Jerusalem*; (though this is a Duty of great Importance and Advantage, and should by no means be neglected) but they should be in the Use of other Methods, as the People of *Israel* were. They may lawfully take up Arms and withstand the Enemy; and they may comfort themselves with this Thought that they are fighting *the Lord's Battles*. Christianity doth not oblige them to sit still, and tamely submit themselves a Prey. When the *Church of CHRIST* is in Danger, when her Enemies threaten her Ruin, that is the Voice of GOD to his People, "prepare War, wake up the mighty Men, let all the Men of War draw near, let them come forth, beat your Plowshares into Swords, and your pruning Hooks into Spears; let the weak say I am strong." *

I would add further here, that it is allowable for the People of GOD, not only to stand in their own Defence, when attacked by the Enemy, but if their
 Enemies

* Joel iii. 9, 10.

Enemies are so situated and maliciously disposed, that both their religious and civil Liberties, are in Hazard, they may lawfully march their Forces against them, and pursue them to their own Territories.

Are they annoyed by the *wild Boar* out of the *Woods*? Do the *Savages* of the *Wilderness* distress them? They have a clear Call to follow them to their *lurking Places* ; and especially, if notwithstanding repeated Offers and Attempts, to live peaceably with them, they prove *perfidious* and *deceitful*.

Or, Are they exposed to *Anti-christian Enemies*? Are these perpetually schemeing to undermine them? Is that their Language? *Let us take to our selves the Houses of GOD in Possession.* * They may lawfully go out against them, even to their strong *Garrisons*, and if they can, put it out of their Power to trouble them any more.

Jonathan went over to the Enemy, he saw the Necessity of it, he knew, that if he did not, the Enemy would be likely to come out against *Israel*, and do much Mischief. He went to the very Spot where they were, and discomfited them. Such Conduct as this, is agreeable to the Dictates of Reason ; it has been the Practice of the most civilized Nations ; nay, the Lawfulness and Expediency of it, may be argued from the Practice of GOD's People of *old*, as we have it recorded in the *sacred Scriptures*.

Sometimes the Case is so, with the People of GOD, that they cannot enjoy any Peace, while

* Psal. lxxxiii. 12.

their

their Enemies are suffered to be so near their Borders ; the longer this is permitted, their *civil*, but especially their *religious Rights* are more in danger, and therefore it is not only *Prudence* but a *Duty*, by all means, if possible, to dispossess them. If they have the Glory of GOD, and the Redeemer, at Heart, they may be encouraged, that he will smile upon their Endeavours for this End.

A Concern for the Honour of GOD and Religion, was the noble Principle, that influenced the Minds of many, who were engaged in the late *important and memorable Expedition* against *Louisbourg*. The Fire of Love to GOD, burnt in their Breasts, their Zeal for his *House*, edged them on, and supported them under amazing Difficulties, and GOD was pleased to own and succeed them---This same Principle, I would hope, is stirring in many, who are gone, and going upon the important *Enterprize* now on Foot. Could we see more of this, we might encourage ourselves yet more ; let us be thankful for what we have seen and heard, and be animated to pray, that the same Concern may glow in every Heart.

I pass on to the *second* Thing proposed,

Secondly. When the People of GOD, are called to engage in War, they should go forth in the *Fear* of GOD, and with an humble Sense of their *Dependence* upon him. The LORD *can work for them*, and it may be, *he will* ; but then they must take Care, in what Temper they proceed : This is a Matter, that nearly concerns them, and therefore
worthy

worthy of their serious Attention. The whole Body of the People, at such a Time, should be solicitous what Frame they are in ; if no Regard at all, or but very little is paid to the *Almighty*, if they trust to their own *Policy*, *Numbers* and *Strength*, there is nothing more likely, than that GOD will disappoint them. This is much more displeasing to him, *in them*, than it would be in their Enemies, inasmuch as they are better instructed, and have, in Time past, evidently seen the Hand of GOD, in the *Salvations* he hath afforded them.

Having made Preparations for War, they should look up to GOD, whose *Providence* is concerned in all Events. They should eye him as the supreme and sovereign Disposer of all Things, and commit their Cause to him. If he denies his Presence, all their Designs will be defeated. They should look to the *Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in Battle*. That Prayer well becomes them, *If thy Presence go not with our Brethren, carry them not hence.* * They should humbly rely on his almighty Arm, praying, that he would interpose in every Danger, that he would restrain their Enemies, and lead their *Brethren* on to Victory and Triumph. They should unite not only in *public Prayers*, but spread their Case before GOD in their *Families* and *Closets*. They should endeavour to feel for their *Brethren*. They should seriously weigh the Matter, that they may have some Sense of the Wants and Dangers, to which they may be exposed, both before, and when engaged

* Exod. xxxiii. 15.

gaged with the Enemy, and how necessary it is, in order to their obtaining a Conquest, that GOD should be with them. They will, doubtless have many Difficulties to encounter ; some of them we may foresee, there may be others still, that we know nothing of ; the People of GOD therefore instead of boasting and assuring themselves of Victory, should look to *the Lord of Hosts*, and continue in Prayer, for those *who are jeopardding their Lives in the Woods and high Places of the Field*, that they may not be afraid for the Terror by Night, nor for the Arrow that flieth by Day ; that GOD would cover their Heads in the Day of Battle, and cause them that hate them to flee or fall before them.

In this Way, they should cast all their Cares upon GOD, humbly resigning themselves and their Brethren to him.

It must not be forgotten here, that while the People of GOD, are thus manifesting their Concern for their Brethren, and putting their Trust in him, for Success ; they should be careful to carry on the *spiritual Warfare* at home. If they are not fighting against their Lusts, they cannot expect that God will fight against their Enemies. Their Dependence upon him, is presumptuous and wicked, if they don't break their Covenant with Sin, and exert themselves in the Mortification of it. They should declare War against their Corruptions, *from whence come Wars and Fightings*, and resolve by the Grace of GOD, that they will no longer have Fellowship with them. The more solicitous they are after this sort, the more Reason they have to hope, that

that GOD will subdue *those that rise up against them*. This is the Duty of GOD's People when called to War.

But is this all, some may say ? Is it sufficient that they raise Armies, and send them out against the Enemy ? Is it sufficient that they are daily committing them to GOD, leaving the Event with him, and cleansing themselves from their *own Iniquities*. I answer *No*, It is of great Importance that they who go out to War, should engage in this Service in a serious Temper. Indeed, it cannot be denied, but GOD may give Success to a wicked Army ; but all must allow, that the Prospect of Victory, is much more likely, when *Officers and Soldiers* set out under, and are actuated from religious Principles. It is an happy Omen, when Persons of this Character, offer themselves, happy for them, and happy for the People they live among ; we would hope, it is the Character of many, who upon the *present Emergency* have enlisted themselves in the *Service* of their *Country*.---What their Duty is, it may not be amiss to consider, under this Head of Discourse, especially as there are some present in this Assembly, going to our *Brethren* already encamped, upon whom under GOD, we depend for the Success of this People, against their encroaching Enemies.

Their Duty is as follows-----

They should set out in the *Fear* of GOD. Levity in Temper or Behaviour, ill becomes the Soldier at any Time, and especially when they are going into the *Field of Battle*. It discovers, that they have not a proper Sense of the *divine Being*, and cannot
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but be displeasing to him. They should remember, that GOD's Eye is upon them, that he is perfectly acquainted with the Views that govern them. He knows whether they have any Regard for him in their Minds, whether they have any Concern to obtain his Presence. They should *acknowledge him in all their ways*. Sensible that *the way of Man, is not in himself, that it is not in Man, that walketh, to direct his own Steps*, they should look to GOD for Light and Direction. He is the *Father of Lights*, and hath said, *if any lack Wisdom, let him ask it of GOD, who giveth unto all Men liberally and upbraideth them not, and it shall be given him.* *

And as the Persons, of whom we are speaking, not only stand in need of *Wisdom from above*, but of the Care and Protection of Providence, they should earnestly beg of GOD, that he would *be their Defence*, that he would *preserve them from all Evils*, and *appoint Salvation for Walls and Bulwarks*.

Surely, They who are going into the midst of Dangers, should be *Men of Prayer*; they should not dare to neglect it, least GOD should be provoked to cut them off.---They should be further solicitous that they may be in a State of Favour and Friendship with their Maker.

They should *acquaint themselves with GOD and be at Peace*. There is an awful Controversy subsisting between GOD and Man; and it is of the last Importance, that the Grounds of it, be removed; till then, GOD is our Adversary. This should come with Weight upon the Minds of all,
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* Jam. i. 5.

and certainly it should impress those, who are called into the Field of War.---It stands them in Stead, in a peculiar Manner, to see to it, that the Principle of Enmity within them, be destroyed, that they renounce their Lusts, and all *other Lords that have had Dominion over them*, and now *make Mention of his Name, and of his only*. They should look to him to pardon their past Rebellions, and become reconciled to them. Should GOD grant this Favour, and give them the Sense of it, this would afford unspeakable Solace in the Day of Battle ; it would help to establish their Minds in the midst of the *confused Noise of the Warriors*, and, when Garments *rolled in Blood* may lie before them.

To proceed,

They that are engaged in War, should go forth with an humble Sense of their Dependance upon GOD. They should rely on him for Resolution ; It is GOD, that giveth *Strength to them who turn the Battle to the Gate*. If he pleaseth, he can take away their Courage, he can easily unhinge their Spirits, and make them tremble as the *Philistines* did. Many Battles have been lost by such a Rebuke of Heaven. Thus we read of the *Israelites*, whom *Joshua* sent against the *Men of Ai*. *The Hearts of the People melted, and they became as Water*. † Just before, they had a great Flow of Spirits ; they were so flushed with the Victory, they had obtained over *Jericho*, that they were ready to think, they could accomplish almost any thing. But how is the Case now ? What becomes of their Courage and Resolution ? This should teach

† Josh. vii. 5.

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the *Soldier* not to boast in his own Strength, but to look to GOD, *from whom cometh every good Gift*, that he would endue them with true Magnanimity and Firmness of Mind ; that he would uphold their Faith in him, and not suffer them *to fear with Amazement*. If GOD is thus present with the Armies of his People, they shall do *great Things* and *wonderful*. He will enable them to smile upon Danger, and meet the enraged Enemy with intrepid Courage.

As they should look to him for *Resolution*, so they should for *Success*. The most puissant *Generals*, the bravest *Soldiers*, may be overcome, and they certainly will, if GOD is not *on their Side*. If he denies his Presence, their *Striving for the Mastery*, will avail nothing ; let them fight ever so valiantly, it will be no better than *beating the Air*. But if GOD goes with them, if their Faith is built upon his almighty Power, they need not fear ; through this divine Principle, they shall *subdue Kingdoms, obtain Promises, stop the Mouths of Lions, and quench the Violence of Fire*. They shall *escape the Edge of the Sword, out of Weakness, they shall be made Strong, they shall wax valiant in Fight, and turn to Flight the Armies of the Aliens*. *

Thirdly. When it is the Concern of a People engaged in War, to go out against their Enemies, in the *Fear* of GOD, with an humble Sense of their Dependence upon him ; they have Encouragement to hope, *that the LORD will work for them* ; that he, with whom it is infinitely easy to *save by many*

* Heb. xi. 33, 34.

or by few, will prosper them in their Enterprizes. The GOD of Armies indeed does not say to them, as he did to his People of old, *I will deliver your Enemies into your Hands* ; yet, if their Temper is such as hath been described, they have abundant Reason to conclude, that Success shall attend them. ---Here I take it for granted, that the War in which they are engaged, is *lawful* ; otherwise I should not dare to speak in this Manner. It is entirely consistent with Reason and Revelation, that when, as a People, they are injured and oppressed, when every Thing near and dear to them, is threatened ; they should endeavour to right themselves, and not only so, but do what they can, to prevent Encroachments for the Time to come. This, I think, may be easily granted, and if it is, they are to be justified in all their martial Preparations for this Purpose. It is not only allowable, but Duty.

And now, if it is the Concern of a People, in the midst of their military Engagements, that GOD may be with them ; if they are sensible that *without him, they can do nothing* ; that *the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong* ; if they are persuaded that *Victory is of the Lord*, and they are trusting to his Strength in the Use of Means ; What is the Consequence to be drawn from hence ? Is it not, that such a Temper is pleasing to GOD, and that they may rely on him for Success ? This is certain, if any may hope for a Blessing, they may.

But this is not all the Encouragement such a People may take. There is this, further to strengthen their Faith, that they are *the People of GOD*. They
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are the Professors of his Name and Religion, they have taken upon them the Badge of his Servants, and therefore he will put Honour upon them. Tho' they may by neglecting to *do their first Works*, and forgetting *their first Love*, provoke him to correct them with the Sword; yet if they *humble themselves under his Hand*, if they *turn to him that is smiting them*, and *seek the Lord of Hosts*; if they acknowledge their Dependance upon him, and implore his Presence, from a tender Concern for his Honor, they may with Confidence go forth to War, and trust in his Covenant Care and Faithfulness for a Blessing. He will not cast off his People who acknowledge him in their Proceedings, and engage in his Strength and Fear. He graciously *remembers them, the Kindness of their Youth, the Love of their Espousals, when their Fathers went after him in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown.* †

Another Ground of Encouragement, is, that their Enemies are the *Aggressors*, and not only Enemies to them, but to the *blessed GOD, the LORD JESUS CHRIST and his Religion*. *They have taken Counsel against them*, upon unwarrantable Grounds; and therefore they may hope, that GOD will check and bring down their Pride. May they not be encouraged, that he *will ride upon the Heavens for their Help*, and in his Excellency upon the Skies, to manifest the Honour of his Name. Their Enemies are not a People in Covenant with GOD, they are *Aliens from GOD*, and *Strangers to the Covenant of Promise*. They have this black Mark upon them, that they suppress the Book of the Covenant, the

† Jer. ii. 2.

Holy Scriptures ; their main Drift is to overthrow the Cause of CHRIST ; And shall they prevail ? Will GOD suffer them to accomplish their Designs ? No, he will not. His Church is too dear to him, to permit these *Sons of Violence*, these *proud Oppressors*, to make a Prey of her. They may endeavour to subvert the Foundation ; but his People may withstand them, with Hopes of Success ; with the full Assurance that GOD will not suffer his *Faithfulness to fail* ; that, though their Enemies may *take Counsel together*, they shall be broken to pieces, and their Devices come to naught. The Lord of Hosts is with them, the GOD of Jacob is their Refuge.

It remains now to apply this Discourse.

First. We may infer from what we have heard, that we in *this Land*, have a clear Call to go out to War. The *Perfidiousness* of France, the *Deceit* and *Cruelty* of our *Indian Neighbours*, the *Violations of solemn Treaties*, they have both, been guilty of, are a sufficient Vindication of those Measures, which these *American British Colonies* are pursuing. It is too plain to be denied, that the *former*, have made illegal Encroachments upon us. This, with the great Number of *Forces*, they have for some Time past, been transporting into these *American Regions*, and their Plan of Operation, which, it is said, hath fallen into our Hands, is enough to convince us, of the Unrighteousness of their Proceedings, and the Justness of our own Cause.----As to the latter, (our *Indian Enemies*) it is equally manifest, that they have over-reached the Line, and trespassed upon the Bounds of Equity and Justice.

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What Destruction, have they made upon our Borders, from Time to Time, even from the first Settlement of *New-England*? How many have been carried into a doleful Captivity? How much innocent Blood, hath been shed? May we not with Propriety, adopt the Language of the Psalmist? O God, *the Heathen are come into thine Inheritance; the holy Temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on Heaps. The dead Bodies of thy Servants, have they given to be Meat unto the Fowls of the Heaven, and the Flesh of the Saints, unto the Beasts of the Earth. Their Blood have they shed, like Water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them.* * Have they not taken off our little ones and dashed them against the Stones? Shall not GOD visit for these Things? Shall not his Soul be avenged, on such barbarous Enemies as these?

Shall we set still? Shall our Arms lie by neglected, when such unparalleled Wickedness hath been committed? and when our Enemies are threatening to act the same bloody Scene over again? GOD forbid. Blessed be his Name for that noble, martial Spirit, he hath stirred up in *this* and the neighbouring Provinces. We respect the Names of those, who are gone and going forth in their Country's Cause. We wish them a Blessing this Day out of the House of the Lord. I can't but hope, our present Preparations, are pleasing, in the Sight of Heaven, that it is GOD, that hath thus animated this Part of *North-America*, and that he will appear to protect us. *We will rejoice in thy Salvation, and in the Name of our GOD, we will set up our Banners.*

* Psal. lxxix. 1, 2, 3.

Secondly.

Secondly. We learn what our Duty is, *at this Day.* We must go forth in the Name, in the Strength, and Fear of the LORD. The Justness of our Cause, will not excuse us, if we neglect *this.* GOD will punish those, who do not realize their Dependance upon him, and give him Glory, as the *GOD of Salvation.* Let us not dare to presume in our own Strength. GOD hath shewn us the Vanity of this, in the inglorious Defeat of our Forces at the *Ohio.* They were ready to boast themselves, as though nothing could move them, and doubtless many among us, were inclined to join in Sentiment with them. But in what a remarkable Manner, did a sovereign GOD disappoint their and our Expectations! *We became a Reproach to our Neighbours, a Scorn, and Derision to them, that are round about us.*---This Frown should be borne in Mind, to humble and teach us, where our Help lies. Let us not trust in *our own Arms,* nor to *our own Bow.* While *some trust in Chariots, and some in Horses,* let us remember the *Name of the LORD our GOD.* Let us endeavour to realize the over-ruling Agency of Heaven in all human Affairs, and have our Eyes up unto GOD for Direction. Let us not neglect Prayer at such a critical Season as this. The peculiar Aspects of Providence, call for our earnest, and constant Supplications at the Throne of Grace. Let us pray that a Spirit of Prayer, may be more abundantly poured out upon us. It is to be wished, that the laudable Practice of Praying at the Heads of particular Regiments, or Companies, a Custom, that once prevailed among us to the Glory of our *New-England Arms,*

Arms, might be revived. How much more comfortable would the Prospects of GOD's People be, when their Forces are gone forth to War, were they assured, that every Day, they were commended to the GOD of Armies, for his Smiles, by those, who respectively lead them. What an Encouragement would this be to the Faith and Prayers of those who tarry at Home, and how much Sin might hereby be prevented in the Camp? A praying People, a praying Army, are peculiarly pleasing to God, the Spirits of such, are in the least Danger of being daunted; they are the most likely to behave with Valor, and drive their Foes before them.---We have made great Preparations, there is by far, a greater Number of Men under Arms, on this *Continent* than was ever known before; but let us not depend upon these; they are *but Men*, they are but second Causes, and can do nothing, but what they are spirited to do, by GOD who is the grand *first Cause*. Let us pour out our Souls before him, and intreat his Favor, that he would take our Forces under his Protection and Conduct. Let us *pray for* his Presence with our General Officers, that in all their Consultations, they may be influenced by him, who is *the wonderful Counsellor, who giveth Counsel and Strength for War*. Let us pray for all our Brethren, enlisted under them, that divine Restraints may be laid upon their Lusts, that they may be inspired with true Courage, and not be afraid to look the Enemy in the Face; that he would *teach their Hands to war and their Fingers to fight*; that he would defend them in the Heat of Action, that

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they may maintain the Field, and come off Conquerers. And while the Host is gone forth to War, let us keep our selves from every wicked Thing.

Thirdly. We learn to whom to give the Praise, when our Arms are crowned with Success. It is God that leads on to Victory, and therefore the Glory of it, is at all Times due to him. We in this Land, have a loud Call to shout forth the Praises of the Almighty. It hath for some Time past been a *Day of Darknes*, a Season of doubtful Expectation with us. We have sent out our Forces to one Place and another, against a powerful, politic Enemy; they no sooner left us, but the Hearts of many quaked for Fear. But how signally hath GOD appeared? What abundant Reason have we to extol his Name? Our Brethren who first went from us, GOD was pleased to succeed in a surprizing manner. We ought to take particular Notice of this remarkable Providence. Our Enemies were not apprized of our Schemes, till they saw our Brethren advancing towards them. Their Fortresses were soon and easily conquered, and with scarce the Loss of any Lives. Should we be wanting in our Praises upon this Occasion, even our Enemies might cry out Shame upon us, and we might well think that GOD would be greatly provoked. Let us call upon our Souls, and all that is within us to bless his Name. Let us praise him for what he did for and by our Brethren; and let us take into thankful Consideration, his Goodness in sending an *English Fleet* into these Seas at such a critical Season, when a powerful *French Squadron* appeared, and it is likely had taken

taken possession of *Nova-Scotia* before this Time, had it not been for this Interposition of Heaven. *Praise the Lord all ye People, give him the Glory, that is due to his Name.*

But is this all, we have to praise him for this Day. Methinks, I hear one and another, saying, no. The Lord hath done *greater Things* for us still.---This leads me to that more astonishing Victory, the joyful Tidings of which, we received the last Week. A Victory, equal to which was never known in this Part of the World, and obtained by as warm an Action, as was ever engaged in here. Our Enemies flushed with their Success at the *Southward*, no doubt returned with high Spirits, and promised themselves that they had struck the main Stroke. Their Ardor was inkindled to a great Pitch, and it is not improbable, but our Forces, upon hearing of the Southern Defeat, and seeing the high Spirits of the Enemy, were under more fearful Apprehensions than they otherwise would have been. Our Enemies had a great Advantage; In a human View, Things looked very doubtful; and it is not to be wondred at, if many were afraid, what Tidings they should hear.---But now, the *Lord of Hosts the GOD of our Fathers*, steps in with his powerful Assistance. He fortified the Minds of *our Brethren*, and prepared them for the Onset; they received the Enemy with Courage, and *play'd the Man*. The Enemy who just before said, *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the Spoil, my Lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my Sword, my Hand shall destroy them*, now fall

fall in Battle or betake themselves to Flight. *Thy right Hand O Lord is become glorious in Power, thy right Hand O Lord hath dashed in pieces the Enemy, and in the Greatness of thine Excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against us ; thou didst send forth thy Wrath, which consumed them as Stubble. Thine is the Greatness, the Victory, and the Majesty.*

Glory be to GOD, we were favored with such Commanders, and such brave and active Soldiers, that he was with them one and all, and brought to pass such great Things. Let us all agree in this, to *magnify the Lord, and exalt his Name together.* This, he justly demands of us. Let us express our Gratitude in a right manner, the most acceptable Way, is, by our obedient Lives.

I am sensible, it is here necessary, I should add a Word of Caution, which is this, *Rejoice with Trembling.* We have abundant matter for Praise, but let us consider, the Enemy is not yet driven out of the Field. The *Canaanites* are still in the Land, and if we do not suitably improve this Smile of Providence, GOD may be provoked to shift the Scene, and fill our Hearts with Sadness.

Fourthly. From what we have heard, we may gather something to strengthen our Faith, in the present Season of Confusion and War, and that is, that our Enemies now come out against us, are the Enemies of the SON of GOD, and of *his Cause.* They plainly discover themselves to be a Branch of the *Antichristian Romish Church*, spoken of in the Book of the Revelation ; * the Downfall of

* Rev. xvii. 5, 6.

which

which, is clearly foretold. How should this confirm our Faith, excite our Endeavours, and animate our Prayers. Let us not be Faithless, but Believing. Neither the Powers of Earth or Hell *shall prevail* ; He, that *bath set his King upon his holy Hill of Zion, can laugh at them, and have them in Derision.* Let us go committing our Brethren to the Care of Heaven, and praying, that they may be the happy Instruments of delivering that Part of GOD's Zion which is founded in *America.*

I should now close this Discourse, but I must not, I cannot do it, without speaking a Word to *our Brethren* in this Assembly, who are going from us into the Field of War.

My dear Friends,--- I gladly embrace this Opportunity to give you some serious Advice, before you depart hence. I pretend not, to instruct you in the Use of Arms ; was I qualified for it, it comes not within my Province. What I have to offer, is of a religious Nature ; give me Leave to speak freely to you, and may it sink deep into your Hearts.

You are going upon an important Enterprize, and it becomes you to examine how the Case is with you. If you have not the Fear of GOD before your Eyes, if you are yet in your Sins, and have no Concern to obtain the Favor of GOD ; your Expectations of his Presence with you, cannot be well grounded. Fly to the *Blood of CHRIST*, that the pardoning Virtue of it may be applied to your Souls, before you leave us. Pray for the sanctifying Influences

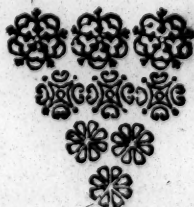
fluences of the HOLY SPIRIT, that a saving Change may be wrought in you. Think of this, I beseech you, as a Matter of the last Concernment, upon which your eternal Happiness, or Misery may depend.— As you proceed in your Journey from us, let me prevail upon you, to be often looking to GOD ; eye him in every Step you take ; dare not to omit one Day, without committing your selves to him, both Soul and Body ; this you may do, as you are travelling along, and if you are careful to perform it, you may hope, that GOD will attend to your Prayers, and not forsake you.

We exhort you, we charge you, to *fear this great and fearful Name, THE LORD YOUR GOD.* Remember, that *he will not hold them Guiltless, that take his Name in vain ; guard against a prophane Temper, and let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouths. Lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that most easily besets you, looking unto JESUS, the Captain of your Salvation. Keep yourselves from every accursed Thing, least you should turn out Achans in the Camp.* It is not for you, or me to say, what Service GOD may call you to ; the Hazards to which you may be exposed, are at present unknown ; GOD only is acquainted with this ; Prepare yourselves to meet him, both in a Way of *Mercy and Judgment.* Should you engage in Battle, *be Strong and very Courageous.* If GOD is on your Side, *more is with you, than can be with your Enemies ; with them would be an Arm of Flesh, but with you would be the Arm of the living GOD.* Say
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of the LORD, he is my Refuge, and my Fortrefs, my GOD, in him will I trust. May he cover you with his Feathers, and be your Shield and Buckler.

GOD of his infinite Mercy grant, that we may see you again in Peace, and have an Opportunity to rejoice with you. Or, if he should order otherwise, should any of you fall *by the Sword, the LORD JESUS receive your Spirits*: May they be translated from the Field of Battle, to the World of Glory and Blessedness above. May you be found in that happy Number who shall at last *stand before the Throne and the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands*. Finally, Brethren, farewell, *The LORD be with you, and prosper you*; and let all the People say, AMEN.

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